

**AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:**

The attached drawing sheet includes one (1) new sheet with new Figure 3H, as required by the Examiner.

**REMARKS**

Claims 1 – 5 and 7 – 14 remain in the application. Objected to Claim 6 is cancelled and rewritten as new claim 21. Claims 15 – 20 are cancelled herein as being drawn to a non-elected invention. Claims 1, 5, 8, 9 and 12 are amended herein. New claims 21 – 25 are added in this amendment. No new matter is added. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 is amended grammatically to insert a semicolon (;) at the end of line 4. The semicolon was inadvertently omitted and is noted by the Examiner. Claims 1, 8 and 9 are objected to for formal reasons. Partially responsive thereto, claims 1, 8, and 9 are amended herein. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to claims 1, 8, and 9 is respectfully requested.

The drawings are objected to under 37 C.F.R. §1.83(a) for not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Specifically it is asserted that “the hard test barrier comprising a copper layer (claim 6)” is not shown in the Figures. However, a copper layer 114 is clearly shown in Figure 1 and described on page 3, lines 25 – 26; and, also shown as 146 in Figures 3A – G, and described at page 4, lines 27 – 28. Thus, a copper layer, as recited in claims 6 and 21, is supported by Figures 1 and 3A – G. Claim 14 is objected to because, it is asserted that “the plurality of identical ICs on a wafer, each of said plurality of identical ICs located in a die on said wafer” is not shown. Although the applicants believe that the originally filed figures sufficiently support this recitation of claims 14; rather than belabor this point, a new figure, Fig. 3H is included herewith, specifically showing a wafer 142 with multiple identical ICs. Accordingly, the applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to claims 6 (now 21) and 14.

Further, the applicants note that while claim 6 is objected to, it has not been rejected for substantive reasons. Therefore, claim 6 is deemed to encompass patentable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, claim 6 is rewritten in independent form as new claim 21. Thus, new claim 21 is believed to be allowable. Further, claims 22 – 25, which depend from claim 6 and substantially parallel claims 2 – 4 and 7, are also believed to be allowable. Independent consideration and allowance of new claims 21 – 25 is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 – 5 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,798,050 to Homma et al. Claims 1 and 5 – 7 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Tseng et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,696,356 in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,876,213 to McCormick. Claims 8 – 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Degani et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,232,212 in view of McCormick. Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Degani et al. in view of McCormick, Homma and published U.S. Patent Application No. 2003/0034489 to Bhattacharya et al.

However, claim 1 is amended to recite that the hard test barrier layer is plated, which is not found or suggested in any reference of record. Similarly, claim 8 is amended to recite that the hard test barrier layer is plated to the seed layer. This amendment to claims 1 and 8 is supported by cancelled claim 6. Since no reference of record shows a “plated hard test barrier layer” as recited in the amended claim 1 or the test barrier layer plated to a seed layer as recited in claim 8, amended claims 1 and 8 are believed to be patentable over all references of record. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1 and 8 is respectfully solicited.

Furthermore, since dependent claims include all of the differences with the prior art as the claims from which they depend, claims 2 – 5, 7, and 9 – 14, which depend from claims 1 and 8, respectively, are also believed to be patentable over all references of record. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 2 – 5, 7, and 9 – 14 is respectfully solicited.


The applicants thank the Examiner for efforts, both past and present, in examining the application. Believing the application to be in condition for allowance, both for the amendments to the claims and for the reasons set forth above, the applicants respectfully request that the Examiner independently consider new claims 21 – 25, reconsider and withdraw the objection to the drawings and claims 1, 8 and 9, reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 1 – 5, 7 – 14, under 35 U.S.C. §§102(e) and 103(a), and allow the application to issue.

Should the Examiner believe anything further may be required, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the local telephone number listed below for a telephonic or personal interview to discuss any other changes.

Please charge any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to IBM Corporation Deposit Account No. 09-0458 and advise us accordingly.

Respectfully Submitted,

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(Date)



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**APPENDIX**